المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

15 May 1990

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing St
London SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

On the occasion of President Mubarak's visit to you, we very much hope that you will find an opportunity to draw his attention to the abysmal human rights record of his government. Thousands of political detainees are held under the emergency laws, many without trial, or even recourse to lawyers, others are tried before special courts, and often decisions by the judiciary favourable to a prisoner are over-ruled. There are many instances of prisoners being held incommunicado, deprived of medical treatment, and of family visits.

Even more serious is the question of torture. You are, I know, aware of Amnesty International's Report published in May 1989 entitled 'Egypt, Arbitrary Detention and Torture under Emergency Powers'. This leaves no doubt as to the true situation in Egypt. The U.S. Department of State's Human Rights Report of 1989 also states 'continuing credible reports of torture on some detainees'.

We appeal to you, as one of the staunchest upholders of the respect for human rights throughout the world, to remember literally thousands of Egyptian citizens who are suffering unjustly at the hands of their government, their only 'crime' being that they feel they should have the right to speak their thoughts. I know that this is a principle to which you are yourself committed absolutely, and I hope that you will be able to make your feelings known to President Mubarak.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General

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From the Private Secretary

30 May 1990

Dear Mr. Azzam,

Thank you for your letter of 15 May to the Prime Minister about human rights in Egypt.

As you rightly point out, the Prime Minister regularly takes up human rights matters where it can be shown that individuals' human rights have been abused. Developments in Egypt, as elsewhere, are monitored closely.

Should we judge it necessary to take up specific issues and cases with the Egyptian authorities we shall do so.

Yours sincerely

CHARLES POWELL

Mr. Salem Azzam